



Bridging Divides - El Dorado Anual Report 2023

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Mission Statement

The Mission of Bridging Divides – El Dorado is to provide resources and tools to build trust and respect, to depolarize challenging situations, to promote civil and cordial conversations, and to encourage collaboration for the well-being of all El Dorado County residents. We are available to assist any organization impartially and without bias.

Background

Bridging Divides - El Dorado came about because many leaders and residents in El Dorado County were concerned about the growing social and political divides and the impact they have on our relationships, our work, and our overall quality of life. Many of them have been inspired by the work being done in other communities and organizations demonstrating that divides can be bridged and that trusting relationships and respectful communication can be restored even among people with different perspectives and political affiliations.

In the spring of 2022, Ken Futernick and Paul Zappettini met with El Dorado County's Superintendent of Schools, Ed Manansala, and Kevin Monsma (the county's Assistant Superintendent) to discuss ways to promote civil discourse within El Dorado County's education community.

All participants in this meeting agreed that the increased rancor resulting from the pandemic, disagreements over health policies, and heightened political polarization were having negative effects on the county's schools, including diminished morale, dysfunctional board meetings, and increased turnover among board members, administrators, teachers, and staff.

Dr. Manansala, having heard that other leaders in the county had expressed similar concerns about the harm caused by increased polarization in their sectors, suggested that they too might be interested in exploring ways to bridge the county's widening divides.

Dr. Manansala's prediction was accurate. Virtually every leader that Futernick and Zappettini spoke with, including representatives from every key sector of the community as well as several EDCF Board members, expressed concern about the negative impact of the divides and an interest in finding ways to bridge these divides.

Many county leaders agreed that the best first step would be to conduct a convening where representatives from the community could learn about the costs of polarization, the possibilities for change, practice some de-polarizing strategies, and plan next steps to bridge divides within their respective sectors.

Kickoff Events

The kickoff convenings for this project took place in September and November of 2022. In Cameron Park, over 100 people representing multiple sectors of the community participated, including Healthcare, Public Safety, Education, Government, Faith-based, Youth, Non-profit, Community, and Business. That convening was replicated in South Lake Tahoe in November where 35 leaders of sectors in the Tahoe Basin participated.

The convenings' **key goals** were that:

- Participants would come away with a clearer sense of the personal and organizational impacts of polarization.
- Participants would learn about and briefly experience the benefits of depolarization strategies.
- Community sectors would leave with action plans that name people who would (initially) lead the change, identify the challenges faced, the goals they hope to achieve, the resources they might tap, and additional people that will be involved after the convening.

Convening Activities Included:

- Finding common ground in our personal lives
- Hearing about success stories from other communities and organizations
- Identifying how the divides affect us personally and professionally
- Learning about resources available for ongoing support, including funding and partnerships with support organizations, such as Living Room Conversations, Braver Angels, Bridge USA, and Crucial Learning.
- Learning about and experiencing de-polarization strategies such as the use of conversation agreements, finding common ground, deep listening, and choosing empathy and curiosity over confrontation.

Toward the end of the convenings, sectors met to identify leaders, challenges, resources needed, and next steps. Sector leaders initially met regularly with project coordinators, Ken Futernick and Paul Zappettini, to formulate and implement action plans to bridge divides within their respective sectors.



Funding History

The El Dorado Community Foundation (EDCF), which has long promoted service, collaboration and leadership in the county, has been a critical component to the support of this initiative. In 2022, Bill Roby met with the project coordinators and agreed to have the EDCF provide initial seed money for the convenings.

Katy Peek, the Foundation's founder and long-time community resident, said, "I suspect like other communities similar to ours, there have always been tensions and discord among residents and civic leaders, but in the past our disagreements have largely been handled civilly and productively. Over the past few years, however, political rancor, the widespread use of social media, and the pandemic have caused the divides among friends, families, and community leaders to widen dramatically in our county. There is less trust and less willingness to listen and discuss our differences in respectful ways. I'm thrilled that our Foundation is taking an active role in bridging these divides."

The EDCF agreed to provide \$50,000 to support the initiative. [Note: additional budget details for 2022-23 and 2024 appear at the end of this report]

Project Advisors

Ken Futernick, former EDCF Board Member, Professor Emeritus, Sac State.

Paul Zappettini, EDCF Board Vice President, retired attorney.

Brian Veerkamp, EDCF Board Member, El Dorado Irrigation District Board Member, former County Supervisor.

Keri Phillips, Superintendent, Gold Trail Union School District.

Ed Manansala, El Dorado County Superintendent of Schools and EDCF Board Member.

Lori Veerkamp, Board Member, El Dorado Union High School District.

Allan Priest, EDCF Board President

Project Impact

When Bridging Divides - El Dorado was launched in the fall of 2022, we established three primary goals related to the (1) levels of participation among county residents; (2) diversity of participation; and (3) impact of participation. Detailed impact data is provided below.

Strategic Plan (September 2022 – December 2023)

Planned Activity	Actual
<p>Provide regular opportunities, both online and face-to-face, for county residents to learn and practice bridging skills. Ongoing face-to-face workshops will be offered to residents (at schools, libraries, and other available venues) in their local communities (e.g., Fairplay, El Dorado Hills, Cameron Park, Placerville, Pollock Pines, Georgetown, South Lake Tahoe).</p>	<p>See event summary below.</p>
<p>Enable county residents to subscribe to Bridging Divides – El Dorado Newsletter and to receive notifications about events and resources.</p>	<p>By February 2023, there were 234 subscribers; as of December 2023 there were 344.</p>
<p>Provide funding in the form of competitive “mini-grants” for organizations to conduct activities that a) bridge divides within their organizations (or sector); b) bridge divides with other organizations (or sectors); or c) bridge divides with the people served by their organizations (or sector). The Bridging Divides Planning Committee will draft and post a mini-grant Request For Proposals for community organizations. Proposal submissions will be evaluated by a Bridging Divides Grants sub-committee (much like the committee that evaluates Women’s Fund proposals).</p>	<p>“Mini-grants” were not offered. Original grant proposal that included a budget item for these grants was not fully funded.</p>
<p>Contract with a part-time project coordinator. Duties to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plan, coordinate, and help run local, face-to-face bridging workshops. Select venues, identify and invite local residents, help set workshop agendas, and collaborate with workshop facilitators. ● Maintain Bridging Divides – El Dorado website (e.g., update events page, add articles, videos, books, podcasts to resource webpage). 	<p>Kristina Vasquez was hired as an independent contractor in April of 2023. She has assisted in many of our events, and continues to coordinate our efforts.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manage the Bridging Divides – El Dorado monthly newsletter. ● Help plan and conduct Sector Leads meetings (approximately 6 per year). ● Coordinate planning and problem-solving meetings with mini-grant recipients. ● Collaborate with Bridging Divides co-leads, Ken Futernick and Paul Zappettini; with Planning Committee; Bridging Divides Workshop Facilitator; and with external partners (e.g., Braver Angels, Living Room Conversations). 	
<p>Contract with trained and experienced facilitators. Duties to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plan and conduct face-to-face and online bridging workshops based on local needs. Collect and share outcome data with workshop participants, local leaders, and Planning Team. ● As requested by mini-grant recipients, help plan, coordinate, and conduct bridging activities. ● Collaborate with Bridging Divides co-leads, Ken Futernick and Paul Zappettini, with Planning Committee, Bridging Divides Project Coordinator, and with external partners (e.g., Braver Angels, Living Room Conversations). 	<p>Trained facilitators from Braver Angels and Living Room Conversations were utilized but thus far all were willing to assist pro bono.</p>
<p>Video production to help promote and sustain project goals. Edit and post approximately 25 interviews; produce a short documentary by December 2023.</p>	<p>Video taping was performed at the project kickoff events in Cameron Park and South Lake Tahoe. Interviews about the impact of the divides were conducted with approximately 25 community leaders, students, and other participants and are available on a shared server.</p>

Impact Analysis for (September 2022 to December 2023)

Summary of Impact

Project Goals (By December 2024)	Evidence	Results as of Dec 2023
<p><u>Levels of Participation</u> At a minimum, 500 residents of El Dorado County will have participated in a “bridging” event conducted or co-sponsored by Bridging Divides- El Dorado.</p>	<p>Event registration logs.</p>	<p>As of December 2023, 519 residents have participated.</p>
<p><u>Diversity of Participation</u> At least 50 residents will have participated from each of these sectors: education, faith-based, business, healthcare, non-profit, public safety, youth, and government.</p> <p>At least 35% of participants will have identified as leaning conservative; at least 35% leaning liberal.</p> <p>Geographic diversity (Metrics to be determined. Perhaps minimum percentage of residents by supervisorial district)</p>	<p>In-person and online surveys conducted over time that gather data on residence, political leaning, sector affiliation, and impact of participation on communication, productivity, and trust over time.</p>	<p>Sector participation is described in the Event Summary below.</p>
<p><u>Impact of Participation</u> 75% or more of event participants will have reported that Bridging Divides events, tools, and resources have, over time (e.g., 6 months, 12 months, 18 months), improved communication, productivity, and trust in their personal and/or professional lives.</p>	<p>Case studies illustrating impact (e.g., large meeting among mobile home residents and owners; collaboration between two Chambers of Commerce in SLT)</p>	<p>Data from survey of project impact (see below), 83% indicated that they had been able to implement a variety of bridging strategies in their personal and work lives.</p> <p>When asked how successful participants have been implementing bridging strategies into your life, relationships, conversations, 82%</p>

		responded either “Very” (11%), “Mostly” (40%), or “Mixed” (31%). 2% responded “Mostly unsuccessful.”
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Event Summary

Event: [Kick-off convening Part 1](#)**Date:** 9/29/22**Participants:** 110**Format:** In-person**Location:** Cameron Park**Description:** Over 100 people representing multiple sectors of the community.

Activities included:

- Finding common ground in our personal lives
- Hearing about success stories from other communities and organizations
- Identifying how the divides affect us personally and professionally
- Learning about resources available for ongoing support, including funding and partnerships with support organizations, including [Living Room Conversations](#), [Braver Angels](#), [Bridge USA](#), [Crucial Learning](#),
- Learning about and experiencing depolarization strategies such as the use of conversation agreements, finding common ground, deep listening, and choosing empathy and curiosity over confrontation.

Sector Participation: Education, Healthcare, Public Safety, Government, Faith-based, Youth, Non-profit, and Business.**Event:** [County Schools Superintendents Retreat Part 1](#)**Date:** 11/3/22**Participants:** 10**Format:** In-person**Location:****Description:** Ken Futernick made a presentation at the fall retreat for the county's school superintendents. He provided an update on Bridging Divides, discussed the costs of depolarization in school settings, and offered a few strategies that could be implemented to bridge common divides.**Sector Participation:** Education**Event:** [Kick-off convening Part 2](#)**Date:** 11/18/22**Participants:** 35**Format:** In-person**Location:** South Lake Tahoe**Description:** over 30 leaders from the South Lake Tahoe region (and a few from the Western Slope) participated in the Bridging Divides-El Dorado convening at the Boys and Girls Club of Lake Tahoe. Based on feedback received from several participants, the event succeeded in calling attention to the problems that result from polarization. They also learned about some of the depolarization strategies that can help bridge divides.**Sector Participation:** Education, Healthcare, Government, Youth, Non-profit, and Business.**Event:** [Coffee and Conversation - Homelessness](#)**Date:** 12/6/22**Participants:** 22**Format:** Online

Location: Online

Description: Bridging Divides, in participation with Braver Angels, hosted an online bridging skills workshop focused on the topic of Homelessness.

Sector Participation: Mixed

Event: [County Schools Superintendents Retreat Part 2](#)

Date: 1/12/23

Participants: 10

Format: In-person

Location:

Description: Ken Futernick made a follow-up presentation for more of the county's school superintendents. He provided an update on Bridging Divides, discussed the costs of depolarization in school settings, and offered a few strategies that could be implemented to bridge common divides.

Sector Participation: Education

Event: [Lake Tahoe Unified Board Retreat](#)

Date: 1/14/23

Participants: 10

Format: In-person

Location: Board chamber

Description: Ken introduced BD-ED, facilitated a "schoolhouse conversation" about the strengths of the district and the challenges it faces, and conducted some bridging exercises.

Sector Participation: Education

Event: [Public Safety Meeting](#)

Date: 2/1/23

Participants: 10

Format: In-person

Location:

Description: Paul Zappettini and Ken Futernick shared details about Bridging Divides - El Dorado with several members of the Public Safety sector at the El Dorado County Sheriff's office. The meeting included Sheriff Jeff Leikauf, Chief Joseph Wren, Joe Alexander from the DA's office, Brian Richart from El Dorado County Probation, and Tim Cordero and Mo Johns from El Dorado County Fire.

Sector Participation: Public Safety

Event: [Youth Commission Meeting](#)

Date: 2/15/23

Participants: 20

Format: In-person

Location: Placerville

Description: A Youth Commission meeting took place at EDCOE where Bridging Divides was discussed and video interviews with some of the commissioners were shared.

Sector Participation: Youth

Event: [Intro to Bridging Strategies with Braver Angels](#)

Date: 2/15/23

Participants: 30

Format: Online

Location: Online

Description: Bridging Divides-El Dorado conducted a 90-minute online event called "An Introduction to Bridging Strategies with Braver Angels." Approximately 30 county residents participated.

Sector Participation: Unknown

Event: [El Dorado County Leadership Seminar](#)

Date: 3/1/23

Participants: 30

Format: In-person

Location: EDCOE

Description: Ken introduced BD-ED and facilitated a bridging activity focused on listening and "looping."

Sector Participation: Education, Public Safety, Business, Government, Non-Profit

Event: [South Lake Tahoe Chambers Meeting](#)

Date: 3/24/23

Participants: 15

Format: In-person

Location: South Lake Tahoe

Description: Paul Zappettini, Allan Priest, and Ken Futernick met with leaders from the Tahoe Chamber of Commerce and the South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce to explore opportunities for the two organizations to collaborate. Both chambers agreed to meet regularly and to co-sponsor a future workshop with Braver Angels.

Sector Participation: Business

Event: [Depolarization Within Workshop with Braver Angels](#)

Date: 4/15/23

Participants: 15

Format: In-person

Location: South Lake Tahoe

Description: Braver Angels conducted a "Depolarizing Within" workshop in South Lake Tahoe. The workshop focused on the following goals:

- How to be more aware of one's own "inner polarizer"
- How to be critical without demonizing, dismissing or stereotyping large swaths of the population
- Strategies for intervening constructively in social conversations with like-minded peers when these conversations veer into contempt and ridicule for people who hold other political views

Sector Participation: Business, government, non-profit

Event: [Bridging for a Better Future](#)

Date: 4/19/23

Participants: 4

Format: Online

Location: Online

Description: as part of the [National Week of Conversation](#), several student members of the El Dorado Youth Commission along with several students from Golden Sierra High School in Georgetown participated in an online conversation with high school students from Kentucky, Washington D.C. and other parts of California. These students learned skills to help them address rising polarization and isolation through conversation. The event was a partnership between Living Room Conversations, Kentucky Student Voice Team, Georgetown Day School, The LegiSchool Project, and Bridging Divides - El Dorado in California. It was facilitated by students for students.

Sector Participation: Education, youth

Event: [Black Oak Mine Unified Bridging Retreat](#)

Date: 5/7/23

Participants: 20

Format: In-person

Location: Placerville

Description: Ken Futernick facilitated an all-day retreat in Placerville with school board members and district leaders from the Black Oak Mine Unified School District. The retreat focused on bridging strategies, norm-setting, and the setting of priorities.

Sector Participation: Education

Event: [South Lake Tahoe Bridging Skills Workshop](#)

Date: 5/11/23

Participants: 8

Format: In-person

Location: South Lake Tahoe

Description: A bridging event was held at the Boys and Girls Club of Tahoe. Participants had an opportunity to learn and practice several bridging strategies to help strengthen their relationships with friends, family, and colleagues.

Sector Participation: Mixed

Event: [Depolarization Within Workshop with Braver Angels](#)

Date: 5/20/23

Participants: 15

Format: In-person

Location: Cameron Park

Description: Braver Angels conducted another "Depolarizing Within" workshop on the West Slope. The workshop focused on the following goals:

- How to be more aware of one's own "inner polarizer"
- How to be critical without demonizing, dismissing or stereotyping large swaths of the population
- Strategies for intervening constructively in social conversations with like-minded peers when these conversations veer into contempt and ridicule for people who hold other political views

Sector Participation: Mixed

Event: [Western Slope Collaborative Presentation](#)

Date: 8/8/23

Participants: 20

Format: In-person

Location: Placerville

Description: Advisory Board members Brian and Lori Veerkamp were invited to provide an overview of Bridging Divides and its mission at a meeting of the Western Slope Health Collaborative.

Sector Participation: Healthcare

Event: [Rotary Presentation](#)

Date: 8/17/23

Participants: 25

Format: In-person

Location: Placerville

Description: Brian Veerkamp and Ken Futernick were invited to speak at a Rotary Club meeting in Cameron Park where they provided an overview of Bridging Divides and led the group in a short bridging activity.

Sector Participation: Mixed

Event: [Madrona Voices in the Vineyard](#)

Date: 8/30/23

Participants: 20

Format: In-person

Location: Camino

Description: Bridging Divides hosted a "Voices in the Vineyard" listening event at Madrona Vineyards. Old Town Grill graciously donated a variety of salads in Placerville and participants were further treated to delicious wines from Madrona Vineyards and charcuterie boards from Diedrick's Cheese. Attendees in small groups had a chance to share their thoughts about what they love about living in El Dorado County and what would make the county stronger.

Sector Participation: Mixed

Event: [CSD Board Meetings](#)

Date: 10/2/23

Participants: 5

Format: In-person

Location: El Dorado Hills

Description: Kevin Loewen, General Manager of the El Dorado Hills Community Services District (EDHCSD) reached out to Bridging Divides - El Dorado for 3rd party support in scheduling and completing one or more stakeholder meetings regarding the process of deciding whether the EDHCSD should file an application for cityhood on behalf of El Dorado Hills. Paul, Ken, Kevin, and one of Kevin's assistants met to discuss ways Bridging Divides might be able to offer tools and ultimately recommendations on next steps. Four of the board's five members were interviewed either individually or in pairs. Following the interviews, a report was produced which summarized board member viewpoints and provided detailed recommendations on how the EDHCSD might proceed going forward keeping in mind the best interests of the residents of El Dorado Hills.

Sector Participation: Gov't Agency

Event: [Kiwanis Presentation](#)

Date: 10/11/23

Participants: 25

Format: In-person

Location: Placerville

Description: Paul Zappettini, Brian Veerkamp, and Ken Futernick provided an overview of Bridging Divides and conducted a short bridging activity with members of the Placerville Kiwanis Club.

Sector Participation: Mixed

Event: [HUB Navigator Presentation](#)

Date: 10/17/23

Participants: 20

Format: In-person

Location: Placerville

Description: Paul Zappettini and Ken Futernick provided an overview of Bridging Divides and conducted a short bridging activity with members of the Library HUB staff.

Sector Participation: Non-profit

Event: [Pine-O-Mine Cider Social](#)

Date: 10/27/23

Participants: 40

Format: In-person

Location: Camino

Description: Bridging Divides hosted a “Cider Social” listening event at Pine-O-Mine Ranch. Attendees in small groups had a chance to share their thoughts about what they love about living in El Dorado County and what would make the county stronger.

Sector Participation: Mixed

Event: [Bridging through the Arts](#)

Date: 10/31/23

Participants: 10 (B&G Club Staff) but arts/bridging activities will be conducted with youth

Format: In-person

Location: South Lake Tahoe

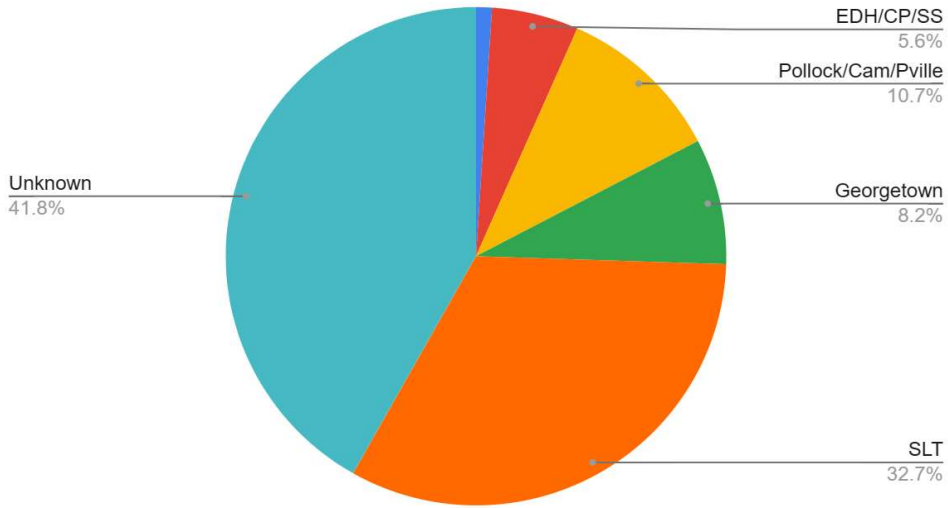
Description: At the request of the Boys and Girls Club of Lake Tahoe, Bridging Divides facilitated a partnership between the education outreach director from CLARA Classroom in Sacramento and Jude Wood from the Boys and Girls Club of Lake Tahoe. Initial plans are to train staff in strategies to use the arts to build community and bridge divides among youth. Plans are in the works to provide similar training to educators and youth organizations on the Western Slope.

Sector Participation: Education, youth, non-profit

Total number of participants: 529

Geographic Diversity of Participation
(based on event reporting)

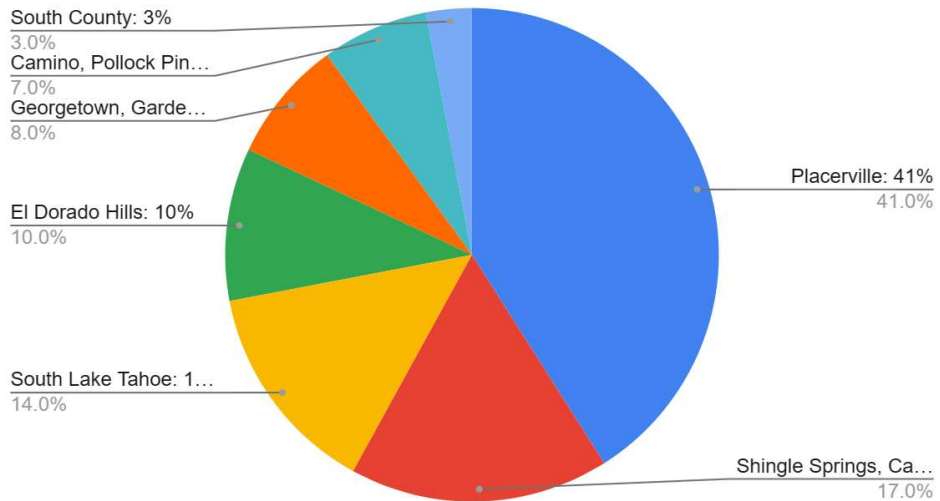
Geographic Location



(based on July 2023 survey)

- Placerville: **41%**
- Shingle Springs, Cameron Park: **17%**
- South Lake Tahoe: **14%**
- El Dorado Hills: **10%**
- Georgetown, Garden Valley, Cool: **8%**
- Camino, Pollock Pines: **7%**
- South County: **3%**

Geographic Location



*This is reflective of people who have chosen to identify their geographic location

Political Leaning of Respondents

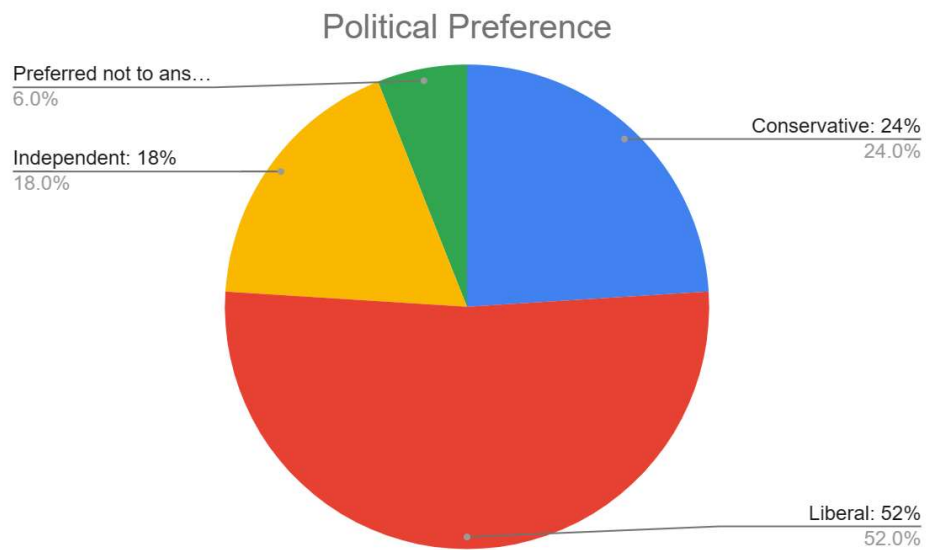
(Based on July 2023 Survey)

Conservative: **24%**

Liberal: **52%**

Independent: **18%**

Preferred not to answer: **6%**



Impact of Participation

How successful have you been implementing bridging strategies into your life, relationships, conversations, etc.?

Very successful: **11%**

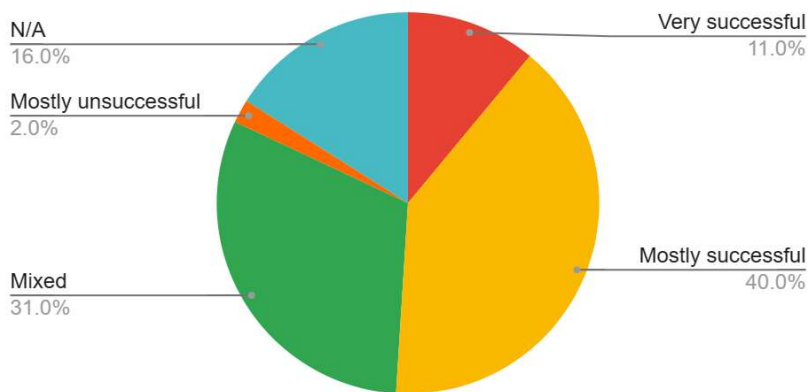
Mostly successful: **40%**

Mixed: **31%**

Mostly unsuccessful: **2%**

I have not implemented any bridging strategies: **16%**

How successful have you been implementing bridging strategies?



How often have you been able to apply bridging strategies in your life?

Daily: **11%**

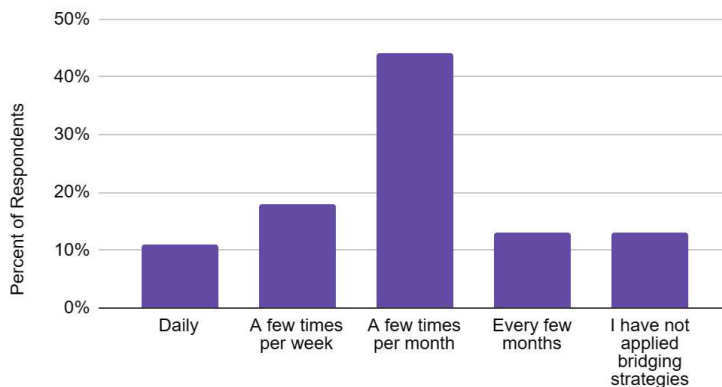
A few times per week: **18%**

A few times per month: **44%**

Every few months: **13%**

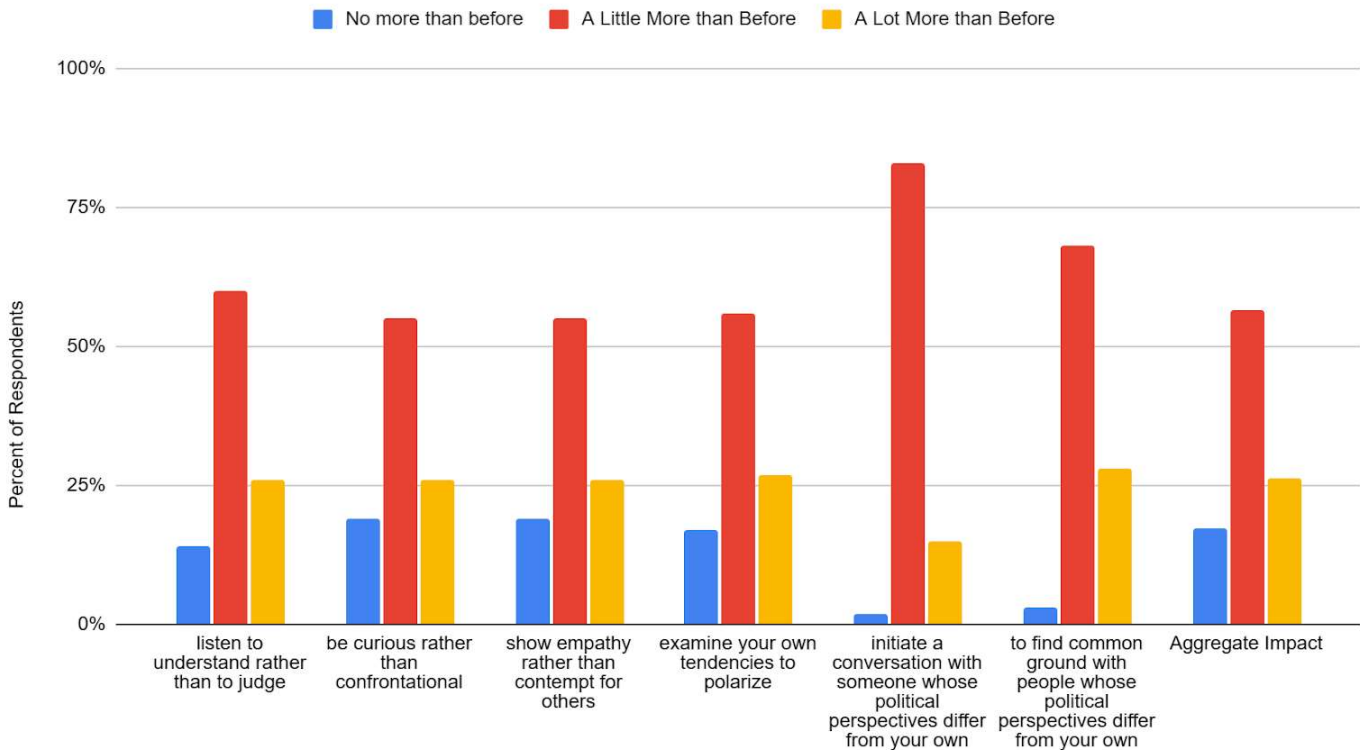
I have not yet been able to apply bridging strategies: **13%**

How often do you apply bridging strategies?



How much more likely are you to:	No more than before	A Little More than Before	A Lot More Before
listen to understand rather than to judge	14%	60%	26%
be curious rather than confrontational	19%	55%	26%
show empathy rather than contempt for others	19%	55%	26%
examine your own tendencies to polarize	17%	56%	27%
initiate a conversation with someone whose political perspectives differ from your own	2%	83%	15%
find common ground with people whose political perspectives differ from your own	3%	68%	28%
Aggregate Impact	17%	57%	26%

How much more likely are you to:



A Sampling of what our Participants are Saying

Event, Date	Comment
Kick-off Convening Part 1, September 29, 2022	"I realize that I am existing in a bubble and that conflict is having a huge impact (negatively) on others in our community. I have lots of ideas for whats next!"
Kick-off Convening Part 1, September 29, 2022	"It was encouraging to see a few familiar faces of people who I am usually at odds with. The willingness of opposing parties to convene in the same room shows an acknowledgment of the problem."
Kick-off Convening Part 1, September 29, 2022	"A reminder to be humble to really listen and think more about making it right rather than being right."
Kick-off Convening Part 1, September 29, 2022	"Seeing a gathering of so many people interested in the topic inspired hope in the possibility of our county residents being interested in working together."
Kick-off Convening Part 1, September 29, 2022	"I like to logically break down arguments and sometimes it can set aside people, so it was good to regain humanity. I like the reminding of solving problems not complaining about them."
Kick-off Convening Part 1, September 29, 2022	"I have a desire to engage with more "Living Room" conversations with residents of the county who have differing views AND authentic desires to problem solve community issues."
Black Oak Mine Unified Bridging Retreat, May 7, 2023	"Ken, I appreciate you and the goal you set out to achieve...The framework will help us in the future."

Depolarizing Within Workshop, May 20, 2023	“Non-violent communication lends itself very well to Braver Angels and bridging the divide.”
Depolarizing Within Workshop, May 20, 2023	“I appreciate the passion and commitment leadership brings to this issue of depolarization. Thank you for the content, skills, and opportunity to bring these learnings out into the world.”
Depolarizing Within Workshop, May 20, 2023	“You mentioned listening for feelings. That is very important! Feelings drive our stories. Our stories drive our actions.”
Depolarizing Within Workshop, May 20, 2023	“I’m more polarizing than I thought I was.”
Depolarizing Within Workshop, May 20, 2023	“I liked the small group discussions. Leaders are very accomplished and helpful in learning how to use the workshop suggestions.”
Depolarizing Within Workshop, May 20, 2023	“Really outstanding. Exceeded my expectations.”
Depolarizing Within Workshop, May 20, 2023	“Very practical advice. I will definitely use what I learned.”
Madrona Voices in the Vineyard, August 30, 2023	“I like this format and wish we could have more opportunities to use the technique to speak with "people of power.”
Madrona Voices in the Vineyard, August 30, 2023	“I think it would be great to get some teenagers involved somehow.”
HUB Navigator Meeting, October 17, 2023	“The very fact that people understand that there is a real issue in division is valuable. Thank you for taking real steps to do something about it.”

<p>Pine O Mine Cider Social, October 27, 2023</p>	<p>“Thanks to you all for putting this event on. I appreciated the message and the event.”</p>
<p>Pine O Mine Cider Social, October 27, 2023</p>	<p>“It was such an educational experience and I have shared it with many people already! I hope the movement grows.”</p>
<p>Pine O Mine Cider Social, October 27, 2023</p>	<p>“We need more of these types of gatherings. Perhaps word of mouth will attract more people. A conversation truly needs to be happening to bring together people.”</p>
<p>Pine O Mine Cider Social, October 27, 2023</p>	<p>“I was expecting it to get a bit more juicy. Questions were tame.”</p>

Strategic Plan for 2024

Strategic Focus Areas	Notes
Faith Based organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1:1 meetings with leaders. ● Provide background on BDED and explore opportunities to work with leaders and/or congregants.
Youth: Negative Impact of Social Media (eg: Bullying)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reach out to the Wellness Centers as a resource. ● Ask people to share personal experiences.
Youth: Bridging Divides through the Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote efforts already underway between EDCOE, Arts and Culture, and CLARA Studios to bridge divides among youth through the arts. ● Continue training for staff in Black Oak Mine Unified. ● Ken to interview Emili Danz about how their approach to arts education can help bridge divides among youth. ● Interview and report progress in Newsletter (SLT BG Club, BOMUSD, EDCOE.)
Food Banks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitate a conversation with the Food Banks in our county to work on a collaboration that would help food-insecure families.
Requested Assistance within our mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (eg: EDHCSD, School Boards, Chambers, etc.) ● Prepare, then send a message to org leaders describing our mission and what we can do.
Educational Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (eg: service clubs, faith-based orgs, libraries/HUBs, school boards, etc.) ● Library book donations, Face in a Book book promotion/social event ● Reach out to individual faith-based leaders and explore ways to collaborate ● Explore the possibility of conducting bridging activities with their congregations. ● Continue conversations with LGBTQ leadership group.
Social Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (eg: Madrona, Pine-O-Mine, Boeger, Serrano, SLT, South County, etc.) ● Pursue a possible event in the Serrano outdoor amphitheater.
Video Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue video interviews. ● Prepare a montage, including interviews of impact to expand

	reach.
Online or in-person bridging workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In-person format where possible ● Living Room Conversations (Trust in Elections)
Presentations, Facilitator requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaborate or speak about specific topics like bullying, etc. ● Stream live or record a video when possible.
South Lake Tahoe events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Topics related to key regional issues such as development, rental home ownership, etc. ● Work with local chambers to collaborate